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VOC FOR IOP/FN
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EAST EUROPEANS LIVING BETTER

ANNCR:

A NEW EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMISSION REPORT ON THE SOVIET UNION AND EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES SHOWS AN UNEVEN PATTERN OF LIVING STANDARDS. VOA'S MARK HOPKINS HAS THIS BACKGROUND REPORT.

VOICE:

THE GENERAL TREND, ACCORDING TO THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FIGURES, IS A HIGHER STANDARD OF LIVING IN EASTERN EUROPE THAN IN THE SOVIET UNION. INCOMES IN COUNTRIES LIKE POLAND, HUNGARY AND ROMANIA ARE GOING UP AT A FASTER RATE THAN IN THE SOVIET UNION...THE DIET TENDS TO BE RICHER...THERE ARE MORE CONSUMER GOODS BEING SOLD IN STORES.

BUT THERE ARE OTHER TRENDS. THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION REPORT, USING FIGURES FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS, SHOWS THAT THE AVERAGE SOVIET FAMILY SPENDS A SMALLER SHARE OF ITS INCOME ON FOOD -- ABOUT ONE THIRD COMPARED WITH NEARLY HALF IN POLAND. CONSUMER PRICES IN THE SOVIET UNION HAVE REMAINED STABLE FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS. BY COMPARISON, THEY HAVE GONE UP THIRTEEN PERCENT IN POLAND, AND FOURTEEN PERCENT IN HUNGARY.

ONE EFFECT OF THIS IS THAT AS INCOMES HAVE RISEN IN THESE COUNTRIES THE PEOPLE SEEM TO EAT BETTER THAN THE SOVIET POPULATION. THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FIGURES FOR NINETEEN SEVENTY FOUR SHOW, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE CONSUMPTION OF MEAT IN THE SOVIET UNION WAS FIFTY FIVE

KILOGRAMS PER PERSON. IN POLAND AND HUNGARY, IT WAS ABOUT SIXTY FIVE. IN EAST GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, ABOUT SEVENTY FIVE. GENERALLY, PEOPLE IN THESE COUNTRIES ATE LESS BREAD AND FISH, BUT MORE EGGS. THE TREND WITHIN THE SOVIET UNION HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN TOWARD MORE HIGH PROTEIN MEAT, MILK PRODUCTS AND EGGS, AND LESS POTATOES AND BREADS.

THE HIGHER LIVING STANDARD IN SOME EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, COMPARED WITH THE SOVIET UNION, IS REFLECTED IN OTHER FIGURES. THE PERCENTAGE OF INVESTMENT IN CONSUMER INDUSTRIES IN POLAND, HUNGARY, EAST GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS TWICE TO THREE TIMES THAT OF THE SOVIET UNION.

JS/PY